



MEDICAL NEWS-PAPER;

OR,



THE DOCTOR

AND

THE PHYSICIAN.

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The Lord hath created Medicines out of the Earth:—With such doth he heal Men, and taketh away their PAINS.—ECCLES. XXXVIII. 4, 7.

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HISTORY OF MEDICINE—No. V.

The diet prescribed by Hippocrates for patients laboring under acute distempers, differed from that which he ordered for those afflicted with chronical ones. In the former, which require a more particular exactness in relation to diet, he preferred liquid food to that which was solid, especially in fevers. For these he used a sort of broth made of cleansed barley; and to this he gave the name of *ptisan*. The manner in which the ancients prepared a *ptisan* was as follows:—They first steeped the barley in water till it was plumped up; and afterwards they dried it in the sun, and beat it to take off the husk. They next ground it; and having let the flour boil a long time in the water, they put it out into the sun, and when it was dry they pressed it close. It is properly this flour so prepared that is called *ptisan*. They did almost the same thing with wheat, rice, lentils, and other grain: but they gave these *ptisans* the name of the grain from whence they were extracted, as *ptisan of lentils, rice, &c.* whereas the *ptisan of barley* was called simply *ptisan*, on account of the excellency of it. When they wanted to use it, they boiled one part of it in 10 or 15 of water; and when it began to grow plump in boiling, they added a little vinegar, and a very small quantity of anise or leek, to keep it from clogging or filling the stomach with wind. Hippocrates prescribes this broth for women that have pains in their belly after delivery. “Boil some of this *ptisan*, (says he) with some leek, and the fat of a goat, and give it to the woman in bed.” This

will not be thought very singular, if we reflect on what has been hinted above concerning the indelicate manner of living in those times. He preferred the *ptisan* to all other food in fevers, because it softened and moistened much, and was besides of easy digestion. If he was concerned in a continual fever, he would have the patient begin with a *ptisan* of a pretty thick consistence, and go on by little and little, lessening the quantity of barley-flour as the height of the distemper approached; so that he did not feed the patient but with what he called the *juice of the ptisan*; that is, the *ptisan* strained, where there was but very little of the flour remaining, in order that nature being discharged in part from the care of digesting the aliments, she might the more easily hold out to the end, and overcome the distemper, or the cause of it. With regard to the quantity, he caused the *ptisan* to be taken twice a-day by such patients as in health used to take two meals a-day, not thinking it convenient that those who were sick should eat oftener than when they were well. He also would not allow eating twice a-day to those who eat but once in that time when in health. In the paroxysm of a fever he gave nothing at all; and in all distempers where there are exacerbations, he forbid nourishment while the exacerbations continued. He let children eat more; but those who were grown up to man's estate, or were of an advanced age, less; making allowance, however, for the custom of each particular person, or for that of the country.

But though he was of opinion that too much

food ought not to be allowed to the sick, he was not of the mind of some physicians who prescribed long abstinence, especially in the beginning of fevers. The reason he gave for this was, that the contrary practice weakened the patients too much during the first days of the distemper, by which means their physicians were obliged to allow them more food when the illness was at its height, which in his opinion was improper. Besides, in acute distempers, and particularly in fevers, Hippocrates made choice of refreshing and moistening nourishment; and amongst other things prescribed orange, melon, spinach, gourd, and dock. This sort of food he gave to those that were in a condition to eat, or could take something more than a *ptisan*.

The drink he commonly gave to his patients was made of eight parts of water and one of honey. In some distempers they added a little vinegar; but besides these, they had another sort called *mixture*. One prescription of this sort we find intended for a consumptive person; it consisted of rue, anise, celery, coriander, juice of pomegranate, the roughest red wine, water, flour of wheat and barley, with old cheese made of goats' milk. Hippocrates did not approve of giving plain water to the sick; but though he generally prescribed the drinks above mentioned, he did not absolutely forbid the use of wine, even in acute distempers and fevers, provided the patients were not delirious nor had pains in their head. Besides, he took care to distinguish the wines proper in these cases: preferring to all other sorts white-wine that is

clear and has a great deal of water, with neither sweetness nor flavor.

These are the most remarkable particulars concerning the diet prescribed by Hippocrates in acute distempers; in chronic ones he made very much use of milk and whey; though we are not certain whether this was done on account of the nourishment expected from them, or that he accounted them medicines.

There were many diseases for which he judged the bath was a proper remedy; and he takes notice of all the circumstances that are necessary in order to cause the patient to receive benefit from it, among which the following were the principal. The patient that bathes himself must remain still and quiet in his place without speaking, while the assistants throw water over his head or are wiping him dry, for which last purpose he desired them to keep sponges, instead of that instrument called by the ancients *strigil*, which served to rub off from the skin the dirt and nastiness left upon it by the unguents and oils with which they anointed themselves. He must also take care not to catch cold, and must not bathe immediately after eating and drinking, nor eat or drink immediately after coming out of the bath. Regard must also be had whether the patient has been accustomed to bathe while in health, and whether he has been benefited or hurt by it. Lastly, he must abstain from the bath when the body is too open, or too costive, or when he is too weak; or if he has an inclination to vomit, a great loss of appetite, or bleeds at the nose. The advantage of the bath, according to Hippocrates, consists in moistening and refreshing, taking away weariness, making the skin soft and the joints pliant, in provoking urine, making the nostrils open, and opening the other excretories. He allows two baths in a day to those who have been accustomed to it in health.

In chronic distempers Hippocrates approved very much of exercise, though he did not allow it in acute ones; but even in these he did not think a patient ought always to lie a bed, but tells us that "we must sometimes push the timorous out of bed, and rouse up the lazy."

When he found that diet and exercise were not sufficient to ease nature of a burden of corrupted humors, he was obliged to make use of other means, of which *purgation* was one. By this word he understood all the contrivances that are made use of to discharge the stomach and bowels, though it commonly signifies only the evacuation by the belly by stool. This evacuation he imagined to be occasioned by the purgative medicines attracting the humors to themselves. When first taken into the body, he thought they attracted that humor which was most similar to them, and then the others, one after another. Most of the purgatives used in his time were emetics also, or at least were very violent in their operations downwards. These were the white

and black hellebore, the first of which is now reckoned among the poisons. He used also the Cnidian berries, which are nothing else but the seeds of thymelea or chamælea; cnicorum pepium, which is a sort of milk-thistle; thapsia, the juice of hippophaë a sort of rhamnus, elaterium or juice of the wild cucumber; flowers of brass, colocintida, scammony the magnesian stone, &c.

As these purgatives were all very strong, Hippocrates was extremely cautious in their exhibition. He did not prescribe them in the dog days, nor did he ever purge women with child, and very seldom children or old people. He principally used purgatives in chronic distempers, but was much more wary in acute ones. In his books, entitled "Of Epidemical Distempers," there are very few patients mentioned to whom he gave purgative medicines. He also takes notice expressly, that these medicines having been given in cases of the distempers of which he was treating, had produced very bad effects. We are not, however, from this to conclude, that Hippocrates absolutely condemned purging in acute distempers, for in some places he expressly mentions his having given them with success. He was of opinion, for instance, that purging was good in a pleurisy when the pain was seated below the diaphragm, and in this case he gave black hellebore, or some pepium mixed with the juice of *laserpitium*, which is supposed to have been our *asafetida*.

An unpopular Sermon, upon an unpopular subject.

LUKE iv. 27. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the Prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.

Two questions arise in our minds on reading this text:—

1. What is most popular in the world? Ans. Error, in Government, Medicine, and Religion.

2. What is the most unpopular in the world? Answer. Truth, as it respects Government, Medicine, and Religion.

We should suppose that a man like Elisha, here called *Eliseus*, a man who had power to cleanse the leper, by directing him to 'wash seven times in Jordan,' would continually be surrounded with lepers, who would seek to him for a cure;—but according to the Saviour's word, not a solitary instance can be produced, in which he was by an Israelite applied to for a cure of that most loathsome disease.

Why was Naaman, at so great a distance, cured, while other lepers in the neighbourhood of Elisha, remained diseased? The

reason is evident:—Naaman heard and believed; the others, though they might hear, did not believe. The Hebrew maid in Naaman's house said, 'would to God my master was in the land of Israel, the prophet would heal him.' This was told, and Naaman found a cure. Elisha's fame was in a distant land, but in his own country he 'had no honor.'

The reason the Israelites were not cured was, because the lepers did not know his power, or were not willing to be cured, unless by some physician. His direction for a cure (dipping seven times in Jordan) was not popular, and he was not applied to by the sick.

People at the present day, are in the same situation, as to the cure of diseases. Many suppose no one can cure the sick, but those called '*regular doctors*,' and multitudes remain ignorant of the poison they use. If any thing is mentioned beside the popular mode, at once they say, 'he knows nothing about medicine; I should rather die than take his medicine.' Many people near my dwelling, are sick, and have tried all the doctors give; and all does not cure them. They are advised to see me, and take such medicine as others are cured with. Many apply, and are cured. Others, who see their neighbors well, are afraid; and dare not use that medicine which they are confident has relieved men in their condition.

There are perhaps thousands in Boston who have never heard of my method of curing the sick, and thousands more who would prefer death in the popular way, to being cured by one not of the '*regular order*.'

At this time, people from the east, west, north and south, come to Boston to be cured of various diseases; they all, without the exception of an individual, find relief and return home. Many here might be cured, but they do not know, or are unwilling to apply, as this is not popular, or their friends are not willing they should be healed in such an unfashionable way.

The great question among people as to religion and medicine ought to be this, What is truth? and not what is the custom, or what is most fashionable? The words of our text are a severe reproof to the Jews at that time.—Jesus meant that the distant Gentiles would know, and apply to him first, though he first preached and wrought miracles among the Jews.

As rational beings, we ought to inquire after truth, and attend to those things for health, which God has provided, without being influenced by such as seek their own interest, and not the public good.

Things as they once were.

In noticing the "Rules and Regulations of the Boston Medical Association," we come now to the "FEE BILL," to which all other parts tend. This is found on page 6, with the rule of charges.

"FEE BILL."

"The following table contains the lowest fees, which shall be charged for the services, to which they are respectively annexed; but in proportion to the importance of the case and of the advice offered, or in consequence of an extraordinary attendance, the charges shall be increased; and the members of this Association consider themselves bound to increase their charges agreeably to this rule.

	Dls.	Cts.
First visit may be charged	fr. 2	to 5
Every subsequent one	-	1 50
First consultation visit	-	5
Each do do after the first	-	3
*Rising in the night and visit	-	8
Rising in the night, and advice at the Physician's house	-	3
Visit on board a vessel at the wharf	-	2
Do do do in the stream above the castle	-	5
Do do do off or below castle	-	10
Do out of town, for every mile from the centre of Boston	-	1 50
Do at Roxbury-street, Cambridgeport, or Charlestown	-	3
Consultation visit at either of the above places, first visit	-	6
Each subsequent one	-	4
Case of Midwifery in the day	-	15
Do do if any part of the attendance is in the night	-	20
Advice at the Physician's house, according to the importance of the same, fr. 1 to 10	-	-
Capital operations, as amputation of large limbs, lithotomy, trepanning, and extripation of large tumours	-	40
Operation of fistula in Ano	-	20
Tapping for dropsy, and reducing luxations or fractures of large bones	-	10
Amputation of fingers or toes, and excision of small tumours	-	8
Reducing luxations or fractures of small bones, stitching recent wounds, opening large abscesses and similar operations	-	5
Passing Catheter	-	5
Do do frequently repeated, without charging the visit	-	1 50
Venesection, in addition to the fee for visit, when at the patient's house	-	1 50
Extraction of tooth, or dressing at Surgeon's house	-	1
The same operations at patient's house	-	1 50
Vaccine Inoculation	-	5
Case of Gonorrhœa	-	10
All other cases of Syphilis	-	15

*N. B. The night in these cases is considered as beginning at 11 o'clock, P. M and ending at sunrise.

Remarks.—We are told that the above table contains the lowest fees, which shall be charged for services, to which they are respectively annexed. They may be increased as occasion requires. It is added, "And the members of this association consider themselves bound to increase their charges agreeably to this rule." According to this rule, and the bonds of the association to increase their charges, what chance is there for common people to live? There is a little mercy; when any one is unable to pay, one third may be deducted.

Remark, 2. The first visit may be charged from two to five dollars. The reader will observe that the doctors charge this for a visit & not for medicine, this the sick must buy at the apothecaries, as the Boston doctors do not generally carry medicine. As I am informed, they are as destitute of medicine as a clergyman is of preaching matter, when he has left his notes at home, or has lost them. This must be an easy and quick way of getting money, for visiting and writing prescriptions.—Every visit after the first is to be charged \$1,50 cts. From twenty to fifty patients per day, would run up fast; with from one to five cases of midwifery at from fifteen to twenty dollars each. I was told that one of these doctors said that thirty or forty dollars per day, he did not consider a day's work; seventy or eighty would do. By visiting forty or fifty patients in a day, and putting three, four, or five women to bed, would amount to that sum.

If a doctor is at loss what to do, and calls another to consult, he must be paid five dollars for the first consulting visit, and three dollars for each visit after.

Rising in the night to visit a patient is eight dollars, and three dollars at the doctor's house. What a great disproportion is this, from the fee of a common laborer! Is this equality?—Is this a republican principle? Does this look like, "All men are born free and equal!" Let the reader judge for himself.

In our next we shall add a few more remarks on the other parts, respecting fees.

Wine.

Wine is the juice of the grape altered by fermentation. The numerous varieties of Wine depend principally on the proportion of sugar contained in the must, and the manner of its fermentation. When the proportion of sugar is sufficient, and the fermentation complete, the wine is perfect and generous: If the quantity of sugar be too large, part of it remains undecomposed, as the fermentation is languid, and the wine is sweet and luscious; if, on the contrary, it be too small, the wine is thin and weak, and if it be bottled before the fermentation be completed, it will proceed

slowly in the bottle, and, on drawing the cork, the wine will froth and sparkle in the glass, as for example, Champagne. When the must is separated from the husk of the grape before it is fermented, the wine has little or no colour: these are called white wines. If, on the contrary, the husks are allowed to remain in the must while the fermentation is going on, the alcohol dissolves the colouring matter of the husks, and the wine is coloured: such are called red wines. Besides in these principal circumstances, wines vary very much in flavour. The red wines, are Port, which is strong and austere, and Claret, which is thinner and higher flavoured. Our white wines are called Madeira, Sherry, Lisbon, Malaga, and Hock. Of these the last is most acridulous, and Malaga the sweetest.

Wine, taken in moderate quantities, acts as a beneficial stimulus to the whole system. It promotes digestion, increases the action of the heart and arteries, raises the heat of the body and exhilarates the spirits. Taken to excess, it produces inebriety and stupor, which are often succeeded by headach, nausea, and diarrhœa, which last for several days. Habitual excess in wine debilitates the stomach, produces inflammation of the liver, weakens the nervous system, and gives rise to dropsy, gout, apoplexy, tremors, and cutaneous affections.

To convalescents, and in all diseases of general debility, and deficiency of the vital powers, wine is the remedy on which we must place our chief dependance; and when properly administered, its effects are often scarcely credible.

In typhus fever, attended by low delirium arising from debility, wine administered to the extent of one bottle or more in twenty-four hours, surprisingly mitigates the symptoms, and finally proves a sovereign remedy.

Its administration is regulated by the effects it produces; advantage being always derived from it when it renders the pulse more slow and firm; when the recurrence of delirium is prevented; when irritation is lessened, and sleep induced. If the pulse is quickened, and the countenance becomes flushed, if it excite thirst, increase the heat of the body, and occasion restlessness or delirium, it is obviously injurious, and its use should be suspended.

The wines prepared from other fruit than the grape are less spirituous and more ac-

cent, and are hence inferior in tonic power. Fermented liquors, especially porter, are sometimes substituted for wine, where this is necessary from idiosyncrasy, and their powers are somewhat modified by their other qualities, particularly by their bitterness, and by the pungency arising from their excess of carbonic acid. Their narcotic power is often greater than is proportioned to their vinous strength, owing to the addition of narcotic substances which they often receive in the preparation.

In the hands of Dr. Rush, and other eminent physicians in the United States, wine, aided by the use of bark, has frequently succeeded as a radical remedy in tetanus. Dr. Hosack, of New-York, effected a cure in a case of lock-jaw, by administering wine alone to the extent of three gallons in four days.—Dr. James Currie, of Liverpool, England, has also experienced the efficiency of wine in the same disease. He asserts that a horse affected with lock-jaw having been made the subject of experiment, was completely cured by the liberal use of wine alone.

Wine has been emphatically termed "the milk of the aged," but parents are seriously advised to beware of giving wine to their children *indiscriminately*; because to them it can be of service only when taken as a medicine; and those injudicious persons, who encourage young people to take wine *habitually* at their meals, are guilty of an abuse, which cannot be easily repaired by future abstinence.

Wine is often adulterated with lead or other deleterious drugs. In order to detect this fraud, take two drachms of cream tartar, and one drachm of liver of sulphur; put them into a two ounce phial of soft water. The phial must be kept well corked, and occasionally shaken for about ten minutes: when the powder has subsided, decant the clear liquor, and preserve it in a well stopped bottle.—from sixteen to twenty drops of this liquid are to be dropped in a small glass filled with the suspected wine; and if the wine turns blackish or muddy, and deposits a dark colored sediment, we may be certain it is impregnated with sugar of lead, or some other preparation of that metal equally destructive.

Thacher.

It is easier to preserve health, than to recover it; and to prevent diseases, than to cure them.

New Publication proposed.

A Physician in New-York has issued proposals for publishing a periodical work, entitled 'THE MEDICAL REFORMER.' The work is to be published in numbers, 24 pages each, one every month, at 1 dollar per year.

The design of the editor is to shew the abuse of medicine, and the impositions practised on the public, by men called doctors, as we understand his prospectus. *Success to the undertaking!!!*

Regimen of Health, Temperance, and Sobriety.

Now a days instead of water (which was the greatest part of the drink in the *antedeluvian* world, and very congenial to the temper of man) we drink *brandy, usquebah, aqua vite*; which are pernicious drinks, if commonly used. They destroy the *calidum innatum—innate heat*—prey upon the roscid juice, change the natural tone of the stomach, the texture of the body, and the crasis of the parts. Hence come *atrophies*, the imbecility of the nerves, and trepidation of our members; which is effected by disorderly motions of the animal spirits, being impulsed and agitated preternaturally by the spirits of strong liquors. Wine is an excellent liquor, if moderately used. It is a great refresher of decayed nature; fortifies the stomach, strengthens the natural heat, helps digestion, carries the food to all the parts, cheers the heart, and wonderfully refreshes the spirits.

The ancients called it *lac senum—the milk of old men*;—but by modern practice it is found, that if they suck too much of it, it will make them children.

Nothing can be of worse consequence to any, than the constant and immoderate use of it.

Sobriety is that which will secure you against all distempers, and make your life pleasant to you; for the harvest of diseases arises from the seeds of intemperance.

By sobriety, there is a good and perfect concoction made. The meat you eat, when it is well elaborated and transmuted in such manner as is proper for each digestion, then a good habit of body is established; the mass of blood has its pure tincture; all the liquors of the body have their peculiar properties suitable to the intention of nature. But if the crasis of the parts be perverted by intemperance, then the alimentary juices degenerate from their purity; the mass of blood and the nervous liquor are depraved, and the whole habit of the body disordered.

Abstinence plucks up the cause of all diseases by the roots. In the inward veins it takes away the *bulomia*, which is caused by the ill disposition of the stomach; and that melancholy humor which is seated in the tunics thereof, and reduces the natural temper to a just mediocrity.

By temperance men shut up their days, like a lamp, only by a pure consumption of the radical moisture, without grief or pain.

If the world consists of order, if our life depends on the harmony of humors, it is no wonder that order should preserve, and disorder destroy.

A spare and simple diet contributes to the prolongation of life.

Magiera piu chy anco mangia—He that will eat much, let him eat little—because by eating little he prolongs his life, and so eats much.

If you will have a constant vigorous health, a perpetual spring of youth, use temperance.

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